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Ex-agent blasts CIA's deception

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The CIA's policies are pushing the United States and the rest of the world toward an almost certain global nuclear showdown, according to former CIA agent John Stockwell.

Stockwell, author of *Secret Wars of the CIA* and a harsh critic of the agency he left in 1977, said he heard the lies. "The CIA and the United States lied to everybody," Stockwell told a standing-room-only crowd Tuesday in the Pioneer Room of the Memorial Union.

Preparing statements to be read by state department spokesmen was almost like writing fiction, Stockwell said. "Do you want to get people to laugh or do you want to get them to cry?" was a major consideration when preparing these statements, he said.

The lying increased during the Angolan situation in 1975. "Never once did anybody in the CIA command or the subcommittee of the National Security Council say, 'Why don't we tell them the truth just for fun?'" he said.

The CIA was working with the South African government to get supplies into Angola, Stockwell said. At the same time William Colby, director of the CIA, was testifying that the United States had nothing to do with South Africa.

"WE LIED [to everyone] from [United Nations] Ambassador [Patrick] Moynihan to the public, and we lied to the president on occasion," Stockwell said. "Everybody was lying to everybody to cover up what we were doing. We knew that the public, the Senate, the Congress, the world would stop us if they knew the truth."

Angola was just one area where the CIA conducted operations. Since the agency's creation in 1947 more than 20,000 covert operations have been carried out, Stockwell said.

"THE ESSENTIAL motivation [for a person to work for the CIA] is a Walter Mitty factor," he said. "Very few people's lives are so complete that they can't use a secret life."

After six years as a CIA case officer in Africa, Stockwell said he had not seen or been part of an operation that seriously advanced U.S. national security.

While in Africa, Stockwell's view of the CIA began to change. "We swaggered around playing our games," he said. "This is horse-

shit. We [were] running operations for operations' sake and not because the U.S. national security needed them."

A superior was able to convince Stockwell that his job was a necessary one. His disillusionment, however, increased while he was stationed in Vietnam after his work in Africa.

When the United States began its final pullout from Vietnam, Stockwell said he was forced to leave 54 South Vietnamese agents behind. He said a superior told him, "John, it isn't our fault these people had the misfortune of being born Vietnamese."

Stockwell said he knew he had to go public with his knowledge of the agency's misdoings, but he didn't know how. "I knew that if [the agency] knew I was writing a book they would try to stop me. Clearly they could see I was disillusioned."

STOCKWELL LEFT the agency in 1977. He says the agency, in concert with the Reagan administration, is now sending the United States and the world toward a path of nuclear destruction.

"We are faced with the almost certainty that we will have a nuclear war sometime," he said.

"Even if there is a one-in-a-million chance to reverse this madness, we have to try," Stockwell said. "I am not advocating revolution. We can force the government to stop if the people become concerned."